AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (**Currently Amended**) A hinge device comprising:

a friction-force generating mechanism that has a shaft supporting — rotatably in both the forward and reverse directions — a rotation-side member on the stationary-side member, and that uses friction force to hold the angle of the rotated rotation-side member, and

a torsion bar that penetrates through said shaft in the axial direction in such a way that parts of said torsion bar are exposed outside both ends of said shaft, with one end of said torsion bar directly or indirectly fixed to said stationary-side member, and the other end of said torsion bar directly or indirectly fixed to the rotation-side member, and that — by being twisted by the rotation of the rotation-side member in either the forward or reverse direction — stores torque that energizes the rotation-side member in the direction opposite to said rotation of the rotation-side member.

2. (Previously Presented) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said torsion bar is arranged in such a way that the torque is approximately zero when the rotation-side member is approximately perpendicular to the stationary-side member, and that said torque increases as the angle of the rotation-side member changes, from its approximately perpendicular position, due to the rotation of the rotation-side member in the forward or reverse direction.

3. (**Currently Amended**) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 1, wherein a stationary side hinge bracket, which is connected with said stationary side member, and a rotation side hinge bracket, which is connected with said rotation side member, ~~hinge brackets — which are connected with the stationary-side member and the rotation-side member, respectively —~~ are attached to said shaft, and said torsion bar penetrates through said stationary side and rotation side hinge brackets ~~these hinge brackets~~.

4. (Previously Presented) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least one end of said torsion bar is exposed outside the shaft, and

the exposed end is directly fixed to either the stationary-side member or the rotation side member.

5. (**Currently Amended**) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 3, wherein

one end of said torsion bar is fixed to and engaged with either said stationary side hinge bracket or said rotation side hinge bracket ~~a hinge bracket of the corresponding stationary-side member or the corresponding rotation-side member, as the case may be~~.

6. (Withdrawn) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 3, wherein there is formed in said hinge bracket a relief part that prevents twisting of the torsion bar when the angle of the rotation-side member against the stationary-side member is within a predetermined range.

7. (Previously Presented) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 1, wherein said friction-force generating mechanism is equipped with a spring washer that is formed so as to have a U-shaped cross-section, and directly or indirectly overlaps and comes into contact with said shaft under a condition that the spring washer is bent.

8. (**Currently Amended**) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 2, wherein a stationary side hinge bracket, which is connected with said stationary side member, and a rotation side hinge bracket, which is connected with said rotation side member, ~~hinge brackets — which are connected with the stationary-side member and the rotation-side member, respectively —~~ are attached to said shaft, and said torsion bar penetrates through said stationary side and rotation side hinge brackets ~~these hinge brackets~~.

9. (Previously Presented) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 2, wherein at least one end of said torsion bar is exposed outside the shaft, and the exposed end is directly fixed to either the stationary-side member or the rotation side member.

10. (Previously Presented) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 3, wherein at least one end of said torsion bar is exposed outside the shaft, and the exposed end is directly fixed to either the stationary-side member or the rotation side member.

11. (**Currently Amended**) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 4, wherein one end of said torsion bar is fixed to and engaged with either said stationary side hinge bracket or said rotation side hinge bracket ~~a hinge bracket of the corresponding stationary-side member or the corresponding rotation-side member, as the case may be~~.

12. (Withdrawn) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 4, wherein there is formed in said hinge bracket a relief part that prevents twisting of the torsion bar when the angle of the rotation-side member against the stationary-side member is within a predetermined range.

13. (Withdrawn) A hinge device as set forth in Claim 5, wherein there is formed in said hinge bracket a relief part that prevents twisting of the torsion bar when the angle of the rotation-side member against the stationary-side member is within a predetermined range.